



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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MAN WHO STOLE MOON ROCKS SENTENCED TO OVER EIGHT YEARS

Orlando, Florida - U.S. District Judge Anne C. Conway today sentenced Thad Ryan Roberts to 100 months of imprisonment, to be followed by three years of supervised release, for his role in two different cases. In the first case, Roberts pled guilty to conspiracy to steal and to sell government property and to transport stolen government property in interstate commerce. The property included Apollo lunar samples and Martian meteorites stolen from NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, and transported to Orlando, Florida for sale. Roberts was arrested on July 20, 2002, while attempting to sell the stolen moon rocks to undercover FBI agents in Orlando, Florida.

In the second case, Roberts pled guilty to possession of stolen government property, namely, certain dinosaur bones and other fossils. These items, which had been stolen from the Utah Museum of Natural History on the campus of the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah, were discovered during a search of Roberts' home on July 23, 2002.

The case was investigated by the NASA Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Rachelle DesVaux Bedke.